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Slavery.

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THE

RIGHTS OF THE PULPIT,

AND

Perils of Freedom.

TWO DISCOURSES PREACHED IN LOWELL,

SUNDAY, JUNE 25th, 1854.

BY EDEN B. FOSTER,

PASTOR OF THE JOHN STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

LOWELL:

PUBLISHED BY J. J. JUDKINS, MUSEUM BUILDING.

Steam Press of S. J. Varney, 27 Central Street.

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J. J. JUDKINS,
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LOWELL, JULY 5TH, 1854.

REV. E. B. FOSTER,

DEAR SIR :— The undersigned having listened with great satisfaction to the Sermons delivered by you, June 25, upon the Rights of the Pulpit, and the present aspect of Slavery in our Country ; and, believing these discourses, if printed, would have an extensive circulation, and be the means of doing much good, would respectfully and earnestly solicit their publication.

A. L. BROOKS,
DANIEL HOLT,
SAM. KIDDER, JR.,
NATHAN ALLEN,
SELWIN BANCROFT,

J. WHITE,
J. CROSBY,
OTIS L. ALLEN,
J. J. JUDKINS,
GEORGE COLTON,

ASA WETHERBEE.

~~~~~

HANOVER, N. H., JULY 28TH, 1854.

GENTLEMEN :— The discourses which you solicit for publication were written in the course of my ordinary pulpit preparations, under a deep impression of fear for the country, and a controlling sense of duty to God, and without any expectation of their receiving a wider circulation. I am grateful to you for your kind approval. I am oppressed by a view of the greatness of the theme and the solemnity of the crisis.

I yield the discourses to your call, conscious that they are inadequate to their subject ; yet believing that it is a time when every Christian freeman should exert what influence he has, and hoping that I may contribute some feeble mite towards arousing public sentiment to the maintenance of liberty, and religion, and all the imperiled interests of the land.

Very Respectfully,

Yours, &c.,

E. B. FOSTER.



# SERMON I.

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## THE RIGHTS OF THE PULPIT.

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PSALM 119 : 126. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law."

THERE are times when the law of God is broken by a nation and its rulers, with such gratuitous and wanton disregard of truthfulness and justice, that God is likely to speak, it may be in mercy, leading men to repentance; it may be in severity, pouring upon them his condign and terrible judgments. At such a time the word of God needs to be unfolded in its political aspects. When men make void all republican principles and all divine rules, then it is time for God to work, and it is time for those whose express and special duty it is to enforce Bible truth, to proclaim the immutable doctrines of national equity. They may speak in the name and in the presence of Almighty God; and they are called upon to speak by every obligation which they owe to God and to man. Such a time is the present — such a crisis is now upon us.

Our country has, within a few weeks past, been the witness of scenes more amazing and alarming than any other events which have happened since the foundation of this Republic. On Thursday, the 25th of May, in

midnight session of the Senate, was finally passed, after a struggle of four months, a law which takes off the prohibition of slavery from nearly a million of acres of virgin soil, a mighty realm of beautiful and fertile land, distinguished by its position, its climate, and its productiveness, midway between two oceans, in the very heart of the continent, in the central path of Western emigration, and of Pacific travel; where noble rivers flow, and verdant praries extend, and all things (of God's appointment) offer to the settler a pleasant home; where the breezes of Heaven have freely played, and the light of Heaven has freely shone, and the accumulations of Heaven have freely gathered for long centuries; where, by the election of the nation and by the foreordination of law, the whole territory has been sacredly dedicated to freedom; where men who toil for their living, and rejoice in the dignity and fruits of labor may find an asylum and a blessed home, and where with wife and children around them, with churches and schools on every side, with books and presses, and refined society at hand, with the protection of just laws, and the enjoyment of varied comforts, and the solace of religious hopes they may happily live and joyfully die, and leave at last to their children the same rich inheritance which God had given to them. Such is the land which is now by one unforeseen and unauthorized act of legislation, consigned to the iron rule of Slavery. Such are the hopes which, by one fell stroke of a most deluded Congress, and a most unfortunate executive, are now prostrated to the earth.

On Friday, the 2d day of June, at three o'clock in the afternoon, a poor, unbefriended, unhappy negro, after having been seized in the city of Boston, upon false pretences, and tried without judge or jury, and sentenced,



against conclusive evidence of an alibi, to be remanded as a fugitive slave to his Southern claimant, was taken into hollow square of armed men, with drawn cutlasses, and loaded muskets, and gleaming bayonets on every side, and trailing artillery following behind ; and from the Court House, by the marshal and his posse of one hundred and twenty-five men ; by the chief of police and his whole constabulary force ; by twenty-two companies, making a military power of more than thirteen hundred armed men, was this wretched victim of a colored skin transported to the revenue cutter, *Morris*, and thence, still under the authority of the United States government, carried to the South, there to die prematurely by torture, or by excessive toil, or of a broken heart. Never before, since British hirelings stood in the streets of Boston, and shot down unarmed and unoffending citizens, has that city been under martial law and military siege. Never before, since the blood of the Revolution was shed, have the streets of Boston been blockaded, and the business of Boston suspended, and the free expression of opinion coerced by cannon and sword, by the menace and the terror, and the death-dealing power of the military arm. These things bring reflecting citizens to a pause ; they bring Christians to their knees ; they bring all who love their country and who value freedom to inquire, under what rule are we living ? What is before us ? What holy truths have been neglected, and what false principles inculcated to bring about these terrific realities ? And what duties in such a crisis as this devolve upon us ?

It is proposed to consider some of these topics. The operation of the Fugitive Law I have introduced as one of the startling signs of the times ; as a finger pointing to the consummation which Slavery is precipitating up-

on us, viz :—unquestioning submission to her decrees, or the rule of the armed and the iron hand. I do not intend to remark upon this point any further to-day.—I shall confine the discussion to two points ; first,—*The Rights of the Pulpit with regard to the subject of Slavery* ; and, secondly,—*The Moral and Religious character of the Nebraska Law.*

I. What right have ministers to discuss the subject of Slavery, and laws of Congress, like the Nebraska Law, which have reference thereto ?

Before attempting to answer this question, I wish to submit a single preliminary remark. The Nebraska Law is a measure of singular and unprecedented grasp and effrontery, embracing the wide question of Freedom or Slavery in the land ; and, with bold and matchless hardihood, by a single stroke, deciding the whole vast subject ; deciding it for all time, and deciding it on the side of the oppressor. We may not discover at first its artful and awful power, but this is its true meaning and intent. All previous legislation on the subject, though it might give some advantages to Slavery, has, at the same time, imposed important and large restrictions ; but here is a law at last which takes off all restrictions, and gives to oppression hereafter full and unlimited sway. This law must be repealed, or Freedom in this country has received a mortal blow. It must be repealed immediately, certainly by the succeeding Congress, or it will be forever too late, and liberty is doomed to decline.

When the compromises of 1850 were passed, it was proclaimed, by both great parties alike, that a finality had been reached ; that Slavery agitation was thenceforth at an end, and it was pledged by both great parties alike that all further agitation should be resisted.

It was a calm before the storm — it was a lull before the earthquake. Already the first great earthquake shock is felt, and the nation reels under its power.— The Nebraska Bill has been passed, and the foundations of the great deep are broken up. A law which violates all divine laws, all republican principles, all national pledges, all human rights, is enacted, and the free States stand this hour in petrified astonishment, soon to pass from their unguarded repose into a state of profound emotion and vehement action. Their calmness has been like the placid sea, under a summer sun — their action will be like the mountain billows in a tropical storm.— A mighty realm of Eden-like territory, consecrated for thirty-four years, by compromise, by compact, by legislation, by universal consent and by undoubting faith, to freedom, is suddenly and treacherously wrested away for Slavery's behoof, and the nation are expected to look on with a moment's wonder, and then be still; like Esau of old, for a little mess of pottage, or rather without any pottage at all, they are expected to surrender their birth-right and blessing. This measure has been devised, introduced, consummated, without the slightest call from the country; without the slightest intimation before hand that such a proposition was on foot; without the slightest opportunity for the people to decide upon it through the ballot box; and yet it has been done with the cry of popular sovereignty. "O Liberty," we may well exclaim, as Madam Roland did when she was on her way to the guillotine, "O Liberty, what crimes are perpetrated in thy name!" The Nebraska Bill is passed; and already the Southern fetter is on our limbs, the clanking of our galling chains is in our ears. For this measure is not designed simply or mainly to hold the black race in subjection, but to place in bondage the

white men of the North. It is a restriction upon our Saxon blood, and Saxon will, and Saxon liberties. It is to restrain the education, conscience and independence of our children. It is to limit our free speech, free thought, free worship, and free action. It is an entering wedge to future schemes of slave aggression. It looks forward to new Slave States in New Mexico, in Utah, in California, in Texas, in Kansas, in Nebraska, in old Mexico, in Cuba; and then the die is cast, Slavery throws off all masks and all restraints, and stands forth undisputed lord of this mighty Republic. Then its black, funereal pall will extend over the free States. Take off legislative prohibition, and slaves would immediately be held in northern communities, and by thousands of northern families, where humanity had received no culture, and conscience had framed no law. This is the prospect before us in the dark and desperate future. Thus shall we come under the rule of an oligarchy more odious than any ever known in Venice or Genoa. The law now framed and passed is the open gate of pandemonium for our country. It is, not the first blow, but the first great, triumphant blow, aimed, with dark and subtle conspiracy, with malice and with glee, and with fatal success, at our liberties. The earthquake shock, following after the ominous calm, is heard and felt — shall it be followed by other concussions and explosions, by Cuban plots, and Mexican invasions, and fugitive seizures, and Black Warrior controversies, and ordinances for Slavery extension, till the whole country rocks, from circumference to centre, and the pillars of the wide Republic tremble, and the whole fabric comes down with one mighty crash? I believe that these United States have never been in such peril before, and that Slavery must now be met by the united freemen of



the North, with calm unblenching front, all other issues laid aside, or our freedom is irreparably lost. Believing this, I should be guilty of treason to my country, and treason to my children, and treason to my God, if I did not say it.

By what right, then, does the minister discuss the subject of Slavery? Is it in accordance with the spirit of the gospel, and with the lofty purposes to which the pulpit is consecrated to consider these things? Most assuredly it is. The object of the pulpit is to promote the virtue and intelligence of the people, and the salvation of souls. General education, universal moral purity, and eternal salvation are the three great ends which the minister of the gospel must have constantly in view, and many of the measures of government, and always those which relate to Slavery, have a direct and momentous bearing upon all these points. Slavery represses education; endangers moral purity; betrays and destroys souls; and no pulpit can be silent on this theme, and be true to God, or to virtue's cause.

But to refer to some specific points, the minister has a right to discuss this theme,—

1. On account of the magnitude of the interests at stake. It is a question which goes down to the very foundations of society and of government. We live in an eventful age. The spirit of change and of revolution is abroad. All foundations are shaken. Mind is on the march, whether that march be forward or retrograde is matter of doubt. Great questions of political economy, and of national ethics are discussed, and are as yet undecided. Ancient empires are known only by the records of history; by the ruins of mighty temples; by the hieroglyphics on faded obelisks; by the discoveries of the antiquarian. Oriental empires have passed away

like a dream of the night. European dynasties have run through an almost infinite series of mutations.—Constitutional governments, so called, have passed from tyranny to some degree of freedom, and from freedom back again to the rule of bayonets and of one man's will. Our republic has tried the experiment of the people's sovereignty for seventy-eight years, and still it is a mooted question in all other countries, and is a question unsolved in the minds of many in our own land, whether *any nation* is really capable of self-government. After all the experience of ages, after all the teachings of history, after all the reasonings of the thoughtful, man is still an enigma, government is still a mystery, and the solemn problems which concern the growth, prosperity and perpetuity of nations, are held as matters of dispute. At no period of the world have the minds of men been more anxious on these points than at the present. Every where nations and States are stirred by excitements, shaken by agitations, convulsed by revolutions. The air is at fever heat. Clouds gather with tropical rapidity. The thunders mutter even when the sky is clear—the bolts fall even when the winds are calm. The oldest kingdoms may perish without any premonition of their fall—time-hallowed institutions may sink in a day—forms of order, relations of society, systems of law, international regulations, principles of administration, may be repudiated and become obsolete, while those who see not, and hear not, and understand not, the signs of the times, are dreaming that to morrow shall be as this day, and the latter half of the nineteenth century as still and unchanging as the midnight of the middle ages. At such a time as this, it behooves the man who loves his country, and reverences religion, and who is anxious for the welfare of his children, to examine foun-

dations ; to inquire after principles ; to ponder upon the opinions which are received, and the theories which are propounded, and to be prepared, if he cannot restrain the storm, in some degree to guide it, or at least to steer the bark, freighted with the treasures of his own love and hope, safely through it.

The consequences will be most unfortunate and fearful if liberty be jeopardized in this her favorite home. This is the last strong hold of freedom. This is the Thermopylae of human rights. The advocates of truth, the champions of universal liberty here stand on vantage ground. They are exempt from a multitude of influences which impede the progress of liberty in other lands. They suffer neither from the cruel rigor of tyranny, nor from the terrible fierceness of anarchy. They are exempt from antiquated customs ; prescriptive rights ; the reign of bigotry ; long continued habits of submission ; preconceived and erroneous opinions ; unjust monopolies, and other evil agencies which are a barrier elsewhere in freedom's path. Here is a territory which is wide and fertile. Here is a population full of enterprise and thought. Here is mind in its forming and plastic state. Here is the last and fairest opportunity, which any nation is likely ever to have, to prove man's capacity for self-government. If in the strife here waged between liberal and intolerant principles, Slavery shall win the day, and liberty shall be defeated, it is the last battle between oppression and freedom which will be fought. Certainly on our continent the struggle never will be resumed, for here Slavery and intolerance appear in a form so unmitigated, and urge their claims so boldly, and pursue their ends so remorselessly, that if success shall be given to the side of oppression, we cannot suppose that the virtues of this peo-

ple will ever be adequate to their need, or that stronger motives will ever be found to animate them to their duty, or greater facilities afforded for achieving a triumph.

If liberty be lost in our land, it will be a singular defiance of the divine law ; a peculiar abuse of privileges given ; an unexampled scorn cast upon the dictates of reason and conscience ; upon the lessons of experience and the wisdom of the wise. If liberty be lost with us, it will be lost irrecoverably, for we shall come under the sway of the most terrible passions. Ignorance cannot be presented as our excuse, and feebleness cannot be urged as our apology. It is notorious that those who fall from lofty heights of intellectual and moral greatness, fall into the deepest abysses of infamy and ruin.— A people possessing such energy as this, and so long accustomed to private and political independence, would never submit quietly to the usurpation of any one man. If our liberties be lost, we shall never come under the reign of a single despot. There will be as many factions as there are clashing opinions and warring interests.— There will be as many tribes as among the aborigines of our soil — as many chiefs as there are restless and reckless men. Provocations will spring up rapid and frequent as the collisions of thought and the conflicts of passion ; outrages will be as numerous as the provocations ; revenges will follow in swift succession upon outrages ; and bloodshed, and horror, and woe will multiply on every hand. In some of the countries of Europe the government is a despotism, while still law is enforced, order is maintained, and rights are in some degree secure, except against the capricious will of the reigning despot. It is the universal impression there that they had better be subject to one tyrant than to a thousand. Science and arts may flourish, letters and philosophy



may make some progress, civilization may manifest itself to some degree under the emperor of Austria, or the usurper of France. But this people are never likely to yield to such control. Theirs will be hydra-headed anarchy, with ten thousand hearts palpitating with passion, and twice ten thousand arms reaching forth after rapine and spoil. For these reasons, if liberty be lost with us, all will be lost — science, and art, and literature will vanish, civilization and refinement, virtue and religion will take their final flight. And we shall be as much more wretched than barbarian nations, as our intellectual force, and our energy of will, and our means of mutual injury will render us more terrible.

Is it not, then, a question which forces itself upon every thoughtful mind, and which every thoughtful mind will attempt to answer, how shall these evils be averted? Is it not a problem which every minister of the gospel may discuss, and ought to discuss — whether Slavery or Freedom is to triumph in their encounter? And how shall the victory be won to Freedom's side?

2. The minister gains a right to discuss this theme from the authority of numerous and most weighty precedents, and even of governmental sanctions. All history is on his side, and all liberal, royal dynasties, all truly republican administrations are with him here.

In the early history of these colonies what would have become of the faith, the firmness, the republican principles of the people, if they had had no such ministers as Robinson, Brewster, Hooker, Mather, Cotton,— names shining as luminaries along the track of time,—men who helped form the constitution adopted in the Mayflower, —men who guided them on by précept, and piety, and prayer towards the love of God, and towards the simplicity and fraternity of a Republic. What would have

become of the cause of liberty in England, in the times of Cromwell, if there had not been ministers like Baxter and Bunyan to co-operate with Milton, and Hampden, and Vane, and Pym, in overthrowing an arbitrary and persecuting government. In the Revolution of 1688, when the enormities of James II. and his minions, of Jeffries and his emissaries, of Kirk and his "lambs," had aroused the whole nation, when the Papal power was finally broken, and the Stuart dynasty for the last time expelled by a long suffering and much enduring people, England was equally indebted to her clergy. When Charles II. immolated twelve men on the altar of his rage and revenge; twelve men who had resisted the tyranny of government,—that band consisted of six judges, three councilmen, two military officers, and one clergyman, and the name, and virtues, and patriotic steadfastness of Hugh Peters, will not be forgotten in the tides of time. Hume acknowledges that the principles of Puritanism were the foundation of English liberties; and whence did those principles spring, except from the preaching of thoughtful and holy men who studied profoundly the Bible, and then applied its teachings to the relations of society, and the constitutions of government?

John Adams says:—"American Independence was owing more to the republican views of the clergy, and the weight which their opinions had with the people, than any other cause." Rev. Mr. Wise, of Ipswich, Mass., declared boldly from the pulpit that "taxation without representation was tyranny,"—thus putting forth doctrines unknown to those times, soon to become the leading doctrines of the Revolution, and for his "sedition" he was thrown into prison by that admirable patriot Andros. Rev. Mr. Dana, of Connecticut,

argued before the Legislature, and pleaded from the pulpit, against the stamp act, and thus awakened the sentiment of liberty in many timid and halting minds, and stirred them up to decision, even when the governor of the state was wavering and doubtful. Rev. Mr. Balch, of North Carolina, was Chairman of the Committee who drafted the Mecklenberg Declaration of May 20, 1774, the first distinct, unqualified declaration of Independence put forth in the colonies, and he was ever, both in the pulpit and before the assembly, one of the firmest supporters of freedom and foes of oppression. Rev. Messrs. Serquard and Lennart, of South Carolina, remembering, as well they might, the oppression of tyranny over their Huguenot ancestors, were enthusiastic in their zeal for liberty, regarding freedom as an indispensable ally of religion, and one of the strongest bulwarks of a Christian pulpit. They were both members of the South Carolina Provincial Congress, and by their great influence as legislators and orators, and by their fervid addresses from the pulpit, they became prominent champions of liberty and independence. Rev. Messrs. Witherspoon and Muhlenburg were members of the first American Congress, one of them signer of the Declaration of Independence, one of them speaker of the House of Representatives, and both of them clear-minded, able, practised, useful statesmen, as well as devout, and faithful, and acceptable ministers of the gospel.—Rev. Thomas Allen, of Pittsfield, Mass., when Burgoyne was sweeping down from the Canadas to the South, and the country had come to her darkest hour, and the whole people needed to be aroused, stirred up his townsmen and the community around, with earnest and eloquent words, to their duty, and then led them forth to the conflict in person, standing in the van at the battle

of Bennington, firing the first shot at the enemy, and lending a most important influence to turn the tide of victory, and to sweep back the insolent and boasting foe. I might stand here and recite from now till sun-down, cases like these of ministerial influence given most opportunely, most efficiently, most patriotically, most religiously, to the Freedom and the cause of their country in the dark hours of her peril.

And now shall it be said that the pulpit is to have no voice in the great controversy between Freedom and Slavery; no voice in discussing and determining the fundamental principles of government; no voice when republicanism, and the foundations of religion are destroyed? Not so thought the Revolutionary Fathers — not so thought the noble and the discerning statesmen of old. In 1778, Gen. Lincoln wrote thus to Gen. Washington:—"It is fortunate for us that the clergy are pretty generally with us; they have in this State a very great influence over the people, and they will contribute much to the general peace and happiness."— Nineteen months before the Declaration of Independence, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts addressed a circular letter to every clergyman in the Colony, in form as follows:—

"Rev. Sir:— We cannot but acknowledge the goodness of Heaven in constantly supplying us with preachers of the gospel, whose concern has been the spiritual happiness of this people. In a day like this, when all the friends of civil and religious liberty are exerting themselves to deliver this country from its present calamities, we cannot but place great hope in an order of men, who have ever distinguished themselves in their country's cause, and do therefore recommend to the ministers of the gospel, in the several towns, and other



places in this Colony, that they assist us in averting that dreadful Slavery with which we are now threatened." Are those, then, who would muzzle the pulpit on the great question of Freedom, following the honorable and memorable precedents of the former times, or are they trampling them all in the dust?

It is not necessary for me to enter into long detail to show the influence which the clergy have had over anti-slavery sentiment in enlarging and deepening its course, and strengthening it with all sublime arguments and humane and religious appeals. The views of William Wilberforce were founded more upon the instructions and conversation of Rev. Isaac Milner than any other man. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton ascribes his indefatigable and intelligent zeal for the slave directly to the preaching of Rev. Josiah Pratt, of Wheeler Street Chapel. The views of Cowper, whose poetry thrills along every line with benevolent sympathies, and contains frequently the most truthful and pungent anti-slavery inculcations, were, to a very important extent, guided by the opinions of Rev. John Newton, his most intimate friend, once a slave-trader, but afterwards one of the most penitent, humane, God-fearing men the world has produced. Is it needful to refer to the eloquent and most conclusive reasonings of Edwards and Hopkins, in our country nearly a century ago? Is it needful to mention more modern names, which will be illustrious as long as religion lives, and freedom wins esteem, for their anti-slavery inculcations? Such names as Beecher, and Bacon, and Barnes, and Channing, and the principles which they have elaborately and powerfully sustained in favor of human rights, the world will not let die. Is it needful for me to say that even in monarchical governments, the aid of the clergy is earn-

estly invoked and gladly welcomed to sustain the principles of national justice, and to refute the sophistries and break down the power of oppression? Recently in England, by injunction of Parliament, a day of national Fasting was observed, and fourteen thousand ministers of the established church, and I know not how many of the dissenting, made the war which Russia has wantonly provoked the theme of their earnest discussion.

Even President Pierce distinctly admits the principle that ministers have a right to consider and to influence national affairs, for in the list of his recent appointment of visitors to the military academy at West Point, I find the name of Rev. Robert Allyn of East Greenwich, R. I. Surely if ministers are capable of understanding and guiding military tactics, they may be permitted to discuss other national topics into which the moral and religious enter with a far more pervading power. Mr. Webster is regarded as of the highest authority by anti-Proviso men, and what does he say of the guilt of Slavery, and of the duty of ministers to speak upon this subject? Standing on Plymouth Rock, on the 22d day of December, 1820, he spoke as follows:—"At the moment when God in his mercy has blessed the Christian world with a universal peace, there is reason to fear that, to the disgrace of the Christian name and character, new efforts are making for the extension of the African slave-trade by subjects and citizens of Christian States, in whose hearts there dwell no sentiments of humanity or of justice, and over whom neither the fear of God nor the fear of man exercises a control. In the sight of our law the African slave-trader is a pirate and a felon, and in the sight of Heaven an offender far beyond the ordinary depth of human guilt. There is no brighter page of our history than that which records

the efforts made by our government at an early day for the suppression of this traffic, and I would call on the true sons of New England to co-operate with the laws of man and the justice of Heaven. If there be, within the extent of our knowledge or influence, any participation in this traffic, let us pledge ourselves here, upon the Rock of Plymouth, to extirpate and destroy it. It is not fit that the land of the Pilgrims should bear the shame longer. I hear the sound of the hammer, I see the smoke of the furnaces where manacles and fetters are still forged for human limbs. I see the visages of those who by stealth, and at midnight, labor in this work of hell, foul and dark, as may become the artificers of such instruments of misery and torture. Let that spot be purified, or let it cease to be of New England. Let it be purified, or let it be set aside from the Christian world; let it be put out of the circle of human sympathies and human regards, and let civilized man henceforth have no communion with it. I would invoke those who fill the seats of justice, and all who minister at her altar, that they execute the wholesome and necessary severity of the law. I invoke the *ministers of our religion* that they proclaim its denunciation of these crimes, and add its solemn sanctions to the authority of human laws. If the pulpit be silent whenever or wherever there may be a sinner bloody with this guilt, within the hearing of its voice, the pulpit is false to its trust." I have quoted this just and powerful passage, not simply to vindicate ministers in the exercise of free speech, but also to bring before this congregation another imminent and appalling danger to which the country is exposed.

The Nebraska Bill having passed, free territory is opened to the extension of Slavery — measures are on

foot for the introduction of Cuba — new and devouring markets for slaves are coming into existence — the demand for slaves is becoming wide and imperative, and in all probability a strenuous effort will soon be made again to render legal, and general, and if possible, honorable this unspeakable atrocity. The signs of the times are full of dark and dismal auguries. The Southern publications are coming out boldly in favor of renewing the African slave-trade. A late Charleston paper, the South Carolina Standard, confidently and unequivocally justifies the trade — flouts at the fanaticism of England in making it piracy — terms it a benevolent, missionary enterprise, designed for the christianization of pagans, and the salvation of souls, and says it must be restored. Even churches at the South are justifying the African slave-trade. At a recent meeting of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, (a body from whom their Northern brethren have nobly separated, because they could not and would not justify Slavery,) a motion was made to expunge from their book of discipline that rule which condemns the African slave-trade, and strange to say, it was rejected only by a very small majority: negative, 54; affirmative, 47. Almost one-half of that large and influential body of clergymen voting not to censure the African slave-trade. If such things are done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry? If Southern ministers are ready to take this position, how long will politicians hesitate, and from what other aggression upon Northern rights and encroachment upon Northern principles will they be deterred? How long will it be before Northern legislation will be overruled, and the reserved rights, the sovereign rights of the free States, be trampled in the dust? How long will it be before



the slave-holders will demand and obtain the right to hold their slaves on all their visits, and in all their journeys, throughout the North, and finally to settle here and retain, and use, and abuse their human property unmolested and forever? How long before these United States of America will become one wide, unbroken, undisguised slave-empire, an astonishment and a hissing in all the earth, and a target for the fierce and overwhelming judgments of God? Forewarned is forearmed.

It will be well if the North are forearmed against coming perils. It will be well if the eloquent, indignant, christian words of Mr. Webster, against the African slave-trade, as well as other protests of liberty-loving souls, should sink into the hearts of patriotic men, and ring in the ears of politicians, till this iniquity, and the Nebraska Bill, and the Fugitive Slave Law, and other enormities of pro-slavery legislation, are scared away to the dens and caves of the earth, there to hide forever. It will be well if ministers of the gospel understand the fearfulness of the crisis, and the solemnity of their duty, and are prepared, as in the presence of Almighty God, and in anticipation of the future Judgment, to fulfil their high and holy obligation.

The minister may discuss this subject,—

3. By his right as a citizen. He stands on a political equality with every other man in the land—not above him, nor below him, but on the same platform of civil privileges and civil rights. This is a land of equal rights, and free discussion, where all minds may mingle upon all themes. We have no distinctions of caste—we have no monopolies of knowledge, and of intellect—we have no aristocracy of talent, or of thinking—we have a certain sacred right of petition, and the min-

ister's prayer and protest to Congress, is just as good and no better than that of other men. His opinions are just as good and no better than those of other men, unless there be something intrinsically good or bad to mark the opinion as valuable or worthless. His office adds nothing to his force of thought, or to his right of expressing it, and detracts nothing from either. It is not the black coat or the gray, it is not the superscription on the coin but the genuine ring of the gold, that makes a man in this country. All men, ministers as well as others, have equal rights in this country — that is, unless we adopt the doctrines of Slavery — and ministers, as well as others, have political influence according to their character, and not according to their office. The question is not, is he a minister? But has he the soul of a man? Has he the virtue of a Christian? Has he the intellect, and integrity, and candor, and information which qualify him to judge? If so, his opinion is received with respect, just according to its value, and no more.

It is the minister's privilege to vote, and he is not called upon either blindly or slavishly to cast his ballot. He has children and friends — he may have as many friends as other men, and he loves them as dearly — their happiness and welfare are as much involved in political movements as the welfare of others; he has a right therefore to judge of every political measure, and every political administration. It is his privilege to read the Constitution, and to interpret its meaning. It is his privilege to study the enactments of Congress and legislatures, and to judge of their propriety. It is his privilege to read history, and derive inferences therefrom. It is his privilege to notice passing events, and examine into their results. It is his privilege to study

the Bible, and apply its doctrines to politics. It is his privilege to inquire with regard to every law, and every resolution of caucusses, and every movement of parties, is it just or unjust? Is it high-minded or unchristian? Is it calculated to promote religion and virtue, or impiety and immorality?

Senator Douglas, in his eager assault upon the three thousand and fifty ministers, says:—"If we recognize three thousand clergymen as having a higher right to interpret the will of God than we have, we destroy the right of self-action, of self-government, of self-thought, and we are merely to refer each of our political questions to this body of clergymen. Here is a great principle subversive of our free institutions." In all this, Mr. Douglas is perfectly correct. We have not a higher right to interpret the will of God than he has, no intelligent minister has ever claimed it. He has exactly the same right that we have, no less, no more. This is the vital principle of Protestantism. We hold to the right of private judgment in interpreting the Bible and the will of God. To hold the contrary is simply and purely the Papal usurpation. And now let me say, it is a poor rule that wont work both ways, and if we have not a higher right to judge of the will of God than he, neither have the Senate a higher right to judge of political measures than we. Let me change two or three words in Mr. Douglas's proposition, and it is as true in the one case as the other. "If we recognize sixty-two Senators as having a higher right to interpret the Constitution and laws of the country than we have, we destroy the right of self-action, of self-government, of self-thought. Here is a great principle subversive of our free institutions." This is simply and purely the principle of Despotism, and is utterly anti-republican.

Here, then, we stand upon the same platform with Mr. Douglas; and by our prerogatives as citizens of a free country, we have the same right to consider political questions which he has, and the same right to rebuke Slavery if we think it wrong, or to justify it if we think right. Whether it is wise and expedient for the minister to mingle in all political discussions, and to canvass with perfect freedom from the pulpit, the various proceedings and laws of Congress, is quite another question, and one about which we should entertain, I presume, no difference. You will bear me witness that I have not been a political preacher — that I have not sought, with forced repetition, in season and out of season, to introduce questions of public debate, or even matters of deep and solemn anti-slavery interest. The clergy of this country cherish a delicate sensitiveness about entering on this field. Doubtless their defects and their sins, in this regard, are of omission rather than of commission. It is only when some stupendous and startling wrong is proposed or upheld by law that you can persuade them to remonstrate, and when three thousand and fifty from New England alone, with consentaneous voice, protest against a political measure, you may be sure the convictions of religious men, and the whole conscience of the country is profoundly moved.

The minister may discuss this theme,—

4. By his right as a student. An education, if it has done any thing for him, will help him to investigate this subject as well as others. He certainly has not been less likely in his early and in his later years, when the intellect was gaining strength, and the mind was gathering in its stores, to study history, and read the news of the day, and listen to debates, and mark the



signs of the times, than others. And may it not be that the discipline of mind which he has gained will help him to form some just conclusions from facts which his eager intellect has thus treasured up? It ought not to be forgotten that before he gets entirely through his collegiate course, he is called upon to study the political writings of the most eminent minds — such as Hamilton, Madison, Story, Kent, and treatises on Political Economy, and on Constitutional Law which open up to him in part the science of government, which set him to thinking upon the great principles of republican administration, and which give him a clue to important knowledge.

Mr. Douglas accuses the ministers of ignorance of political subjects. I am acquainted with one minister, who has sought for all the light which could be obtained from a careful perusal of Congressional discussions. He has read the discussions on the Missouri Compromise Act, and the Nebraska Bill; he has read the great speeches of Pinckney, Quincy, Sargent, King, and others, during the powerful debates of 1820 — he has kept by him files of the Congressional debates on the Right of Petition, on the Texas Annexation, on the Mexican War, on the Compromises of 1850, and on the annulment of all Compromises in 1854. He has read with care a very large number of those speeches, all the strong ones, and many of the feeble ones, running through the great crises through which the country has passed for fifteen years. He has derived some amount of instruction even from the speeches of Mr. Douglas himself. Now, when men have taken so much pains to learn, it is somewhat unkind, as well as slightly uncivil, to tell them that they are totally ignorant, and it might be suggested perhaps that if they are deplorably

benighted, as to national affairs, their political teachers should bear a part of the blame. But I will no further discuss this point than to say that during this present Congress, three speeches at least have been made on this very Nebraska Bill by men who were ministers before they became politicians, and it will be admitted, I doubt not, by all that two of these speeches, (those of Mr. Upham, of Massachusetts, and Mr. Meacham, of Vermont), occupy the very highest rank for extent of learning, vigor of thought, power of argument, and beauty of style, and that the third (that of Mr. Everett) might have been as able as any speech ever made in Congress had he chosen to make it so.

Ministers have a right to discuss this theme,—

5. By the authority of the Bible, which is supreme alike over individual consciences, and over State and National legislatures.

The Bible is a republican book, and it lies at the foundation of all just ideas of a free government. The Bible proclaims human equality and human immortality. It exalts man to a position of the loftiest dignity as the creature, and the child of God. It exhibits the basis, the order, and the sacredness of family, social and governmental relations. It unfolds the principles of natural justice, and adds to them the sanction of a divine authority, and of an eternal retribution. It establishes and explains human rights, and makes them perpetual and inalienable. It lays its hand of authority upon Congresses and Parliaments; upon legislative assemblies and political conventions; upon presidents, and governors, and judges, and counsellors; upon kings, and cabinets, and all human souls.

Mr. Webster once said in irony, at a moment when we have reason to believe he had forgotten the words



spoken on Plymouth Rock — “This higher law ranges an eagle’s flight above the highest peak of the Alleghanies.” Now, we may adopt in most significant and truthful sincerity this language of the eminent statesman, and say yes, it is even so — “the North mountain is high, the Blue Ridge is higher, the Alleghanies are higher than either,” but the Law of God is higher than all — it is above you always — cony’s foot hath not trod those etherial spaces ; eagle’s wing hath not swept those sublimer airs ; human eye hath not scaled those lofty heights ; human thought hath not comprehended its sublimity and vastness. Let rulers well understand that the law of God is with them, and around them, and above them at all times,— it has an eye which sees them,— it has a hand which grasps them,— it has an authority which controls them,— go where they will, and do what they will, and conceal what they will, that law still holds them to its lofty tribunal and its eternal jurisdiction. Let them well understand that “if there be the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.” Let them not forget, that no darkness can cover them, nor cunning shield them — that though they plot their devices in secret conclave, and execute their plottings in mid-night session, and hide their purposes under such transparent fig-leaves as squatter sovereignty and nonintervention, yet God’s law will search them, and expose them, and hold them to its final and dread account. They may take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, or of the sea, but there will God’s law judge them, and over them will it hold its flaming and two-edged sword. They may say this measure is political and not moral — expediency is to be

our rule and not principle — the nation will sustain us in it, and universal consent will divide our responsibility,— but if there be oppression, or the violation of plighted faith, or fraud and dishonor, in that measure, let them consider well that God's retributions will be visited upon them as much as upon the lowliest individual in his deepest retirement. Let them consider that evil cannot prosper, and that the law of God will stand continually by their side, in all the majesty and might of a divine authority — in the stillness of night and the splendors of noon that august Presence will be with them — in the quiet hour of reflection and among the throngs of men that eye of God will follow them and search them — and ceaselessly the rebuke of Heaven will wither their joy, the lashes of conscience will pain their soul, and will admonish them of a future more terrible than any agonies of the present.

The minister is the expounder of Bible truth and the preacher of gospel doctrine, and he is called upon by every obligation which he owes to God and to man, to apply the principles and precepts of Scripture to all relations of society and government, and to all men of all degrees — to the measures and the conduct of those who are high on the pinnacle of office and power, as well as to those who are deep in the vale of obscurity. In the times of Louis XIV of France, Bourdaloue and Bossuet could stand, with open eye and undaunted countenance, before that licentious king and his profligate court, and with a true fidelity to conscience and to God, proclaim the purity, the justice, and the immutable power of God's law ; and the faces of the wicked fell before them, and however their hearts might rebel, their reason approved both the truth of God, and the faithfulness of his minister. It ought to be so now.—

But there is less liberty of free discussion in this land than in some despotic countries. If a clergyman expresses from the pulpit his dissent from any given law, or his disapprobation of the conduct of any given ruler, if he expresses only the deepest convictions of his conscience, prompted by devout study of the Bible, and by love to man and piety to God, he is frowned upon by many, and deemed little less than a sacrilegious invader, burning strange fire before the altar of the Lord. This is neither just, nor liberal, nor republican, nor Christian. Politicians may bandy these matters back and forth with perfect freedom—they may debate constitutional questions, and express upon them the most discordant views—they may discuss laws, past, present and prospective, either in terms of censure or of approval—they may canvass the character of statesmen and public men with a license of tongue sometimes almost frightful—they may carry on these controversies entirely on the lower platform of policy, popularity, party success, time-serving profit, and all is right—there is no lack of patriotism, no lack of loyalty to the Constitution or the laws, no lack of prudence or good sense. But let a clergyman, calmly and prayerfully, discuss a political question, impugning no man's motives and indulging in no billingsgate—comparing a measure of the general or the State government with the word of God, weighing it in the balances of the sanctuary, measuring it by the words and the spirit of Jesus, noticing its bearing upon sacred rights and the general morality, asking, will it promote or hinder education, virtue, religion? Will it encourage or oppose sensuality, ignorance, profligacy, crime? Will it advance civilization, justice, mercy, peace and refinement, or the contrary? Will it open the door of Heaven to wretched

sinner, or will it shut out souls from the kingdom of God? And the cry is immediately raised and echoed and re-echoed, political priest, intermeddler, ignorant fanatic, preacher of sedition — he is an enemy to the laws, he is disloyal to the Constitution, he is a traitor to his country, he is an apostate from God. Once more I ask, is this republican, or is it just?

The pulpit has a perfect right by the doctrines of God, and by all democratic principles, to discuss, if it be with candor and fairness, and purity of motive, the moral and religious aspects of all political questions.— There can be no improvements in States, there can be no changes in constitutions or governments, there can be no discussion or legislation bearing upon human rights, there can be no retrograde steps taken in National or State administration, without involving momentous religious results. The essential elements of all national strength are not wealth, power, conquest, aggrandizement, renown. Luxuries, and comforts, and pomp, and territorial enlargement, the gifts of intellect, and science, and polished manners will not make a republic strong, nor give to it perpetuity. The supports of liberty and of abiding prosperity lie deeper than all this outward show. The supremacy of God's Word, and the rule of an enlightened conscience are the granitic foundations of all political grandeur; and it belongs to the minister to show this. Then will spring up through all the land generous feelings and lofty aims, a pure life, and a quickened and illuminated intellect — these are the soil upon the basis of granite rock. Then will you have justice, and truth, and mercy, and love, and concord — States vieing with each other that they may establish the laws of rectitude — rulers carrying with them always and every where a



solemn sense of responsibility to God ; individuals feeling that religion, and virtue, and justice are more than property, or comforts, or life ; and all, from the highest officer in the central government to the humblest voter in an obscure corner of the land, persuaded that the least wrong to the lowest individual cries, and will forever cry in the ear of God—these are the rich and exhaustless fruits which cluster over all the ground, making the earth to smile in beauty, and the whole nation to be like the garden of the Lord. Then it may be that you will gain many comforts and elegancies, and cultivate pleasant refinements, and become distinguished in science, and literature, and eloquence, and the arts, and win wide renown, and even acquire additional territory, and occupy an exalted position in the sight of the world — and these are the leaves upon the tree, and the flowers among the garden fruits, and in the meadow grass, making the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and to become beautiful as Eden of old.— But be assured you can never have the blossoms or the fruits without a fertile soil beneath, and an immovable foundation on which that soil shall rest. All promises of hope are treacherous, all tokens of national prosperity are a dream, dazzling for a night but wasting in the morning, if love to God and love to man, that is, piety, and justice, and benevolence do not underlie the whole. Splendid cities have fallen, magnificent empires have become a ruin, because piety, and justice, and love were not their support. History is full of startling lessons, the past is full of stupendous wrecks of prosperous republics, and mighty states which perished because they did not heed the principles of the word of God. If this be true, (and there is not a mind here which doubts it,) how could you forgive the minister, who is the

watchman of the Lord, who is the expounder of the Bible, who is set as one of the sentinels upon Freedom's walls, who does not enforce these lessons, who does not explain the relations between the Bible and Liberty, who does not lift up the warning cry if he sees the laws of justice prostrated, and the mandates of religion defied, and the pillars of the Republic trembling? Take any specific measure which extends and perpetuates oppression — which violates human rights — which breaks the plighted faith of the nation — which undermines or overrides eternal principles of right — which debauches the public conscience, and confounds in the minds of the people all distinctions between truth and treachery — which brings upon us dishonor in the sight of the world — and think you the minister should be silent when he beholds all this and more? Such a measure is the Nebraska Law, and how long will the indignation and judgments of Heaven sleep if ministers do not awake to their duty, and if Christians do not remonstrate and pray?

Look at the system of plantation cruelty at the South. As a system it is one of domineering despotism, containing all the elements of the most intolerable tyranny, rendering liberty and life insecure, governing by the fear of bodily torture, substituting brute force for the rule of reason, leading on necessarily to personal combats and bloody, bold, noon-day assassinations even among the white race, (as has been so dreadfully proved of late in Louisville, Ky.,)—taking away the keys of knowledge, making it a state-prison offence to teach immortal minds to read, compelling the ignorance of the slave as a necessary accompaniment of his other wrongs — rending family ties, parting husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, lovers



and their betrothed, with remorseless disregard of blighted hopes, and bleeding affections, and breaking heart-strings — making the family relation a perfect nullity where it was assumed to exist, introducing unchaste license, and profligate vices, and all the outrages which such a fact implies — rendering necessary inhuman enactments, war provoking spoliations, the disfranchisement of free labor, and the subjugation of free territory so that a system begun in wrong and perpetuated in sin, and which cannot live except by continued injustice, may have leave to stretch more widely its grasping power, and to multiply more fearfully its crimes. Look at this system thus sketched in dim outline, and carry out in your thoughts the detail of wickedness and miseries which such an outline signifies, and then ask yourselves whether a minister of the gospel ought to be silent when such an atrocity is before him? Especially ought he to be silent when its aggressions have become bold, and rapid, and undisguised, and to a surprising extent successful? Confined to the slave States, we say to them, if you choose to cherish and perpetuate this curse in your own bosoms, yours is the guilt, and yours is the wo — the Constitution gives you the power — and we turn from you in sadness and in silence, or only with winning argument and kind remonstrance, with gentle and fraternal entreaty. But when Slavery arises from its lair, and stalks abroad in the eye of day as well as in the disguises of night, and says, I have eaten and slept and am refreshed — I will now extend my rule, I will ravage the fair fields of freedom, I will take many spoils, I will subjugate many provinces — I care not for the wail of wretched slaves, nor for the protest of pitying men, nor for the laws of eternal justice, nor for the downfall of the Republic,

nor for the terrors of a future retribution — I fear not God nor regard man, nor value solemn covenants — I will bind my yoke upon thousands of other victims — I will show to this Republic that I am Lord, and that my star is in the ascendant — it then becomes freemen to arise and speak for their liberties, and it behooves ministers to arise and stand with them, and to say — By the decrees of a just God, by the law of everlasting right, and in the name of a dishonored Republic, and of outraged humanity, this must not and shall not be. The Nebraska Law has brought us where we are required thus to stand.

# SERMON II.

## PERILS OF FREEDOM.

ISAIAH 24 : 3, 5. "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."

I propose, this afternoon, to consider the character and consequences of the Nebraska Law, under the following divisions of thought :—

I. The moral and religious aspects of this Law.

II. The objects which the South are likely to secure by it.

III. The duties which devolve upon us in this crisis.

I. The moral and religious aspects of the Nebraska Law. It is a wicked and demoralizing law.

1. Because it tends to pervert the public conscience. It violates the plighted faith of the nation.

It was only after a vehement struggle between the forces of liberty and oppression, only after the earnest and long continued remonstrance of the free States, that the Louisiana purchase was divided, and the Southern portion given up to Slavery. It was only on the condition that the Northern portion, then a wilderness, and with no immediate prospect of settlement, should be forever consecrated to Freedom. It was the universal sentiment of the North that they had made a great concession, that they had been forced into a hard bar-

gain, that the rights of man and the laws of God and the welfare of the Republic had been in some measure yielded in giving up so much territory to Slavery — it was the universal feeling at the South that they had achieved a great triumph, and this was distinctly avowed by Pinckney and others of their leading men. A line of separation was drawn, and upon one side of it was a prohibition of Slavery, founded upon the spirit of the Constitution; upon the opinions of the fathers of the Republic, and of all patriotic minds; upon the profoundest convictions of religious men, and upon all the teachings of political economy. It was a prohibition and stipulation, made unqualified and irrevocable, possessing all the solemnity of a treaty, binding by every obligation of truth, and every law of honor; binding with far more sacredness and authority than any ordinary compact or ordinary law. And now when Nebraska, for the first time becomes of value to Freedom, the South forgets its promise, and boldly and unblushingly seizes upon the other half of the loaf. What is this but treachery, and robbery, and injustice?

Must not this law exert a most pernicious effect upon the public mind? Must it not pervert, enfeeble, debauch the consciences of men? We know very well that law is an educator of the general intellect and feeling. Our law-makers are supposed to be the leaders of the public mind, and in advance of the general sentiment on all great questions of equity, equality and inalienable rights. They are looked up to with reverence, and deferred to with a spirit of obedience and compliance, more complete than in any other country of the world. This is the dictate of a law-abiding conscience. This is the natural result of a republican government, wisely administered. This is the precept of the gospel. This is the anxious wish of those who see the necessity of gov-



ernment and order, and who dread confusion and misrule. Now, what a fearful measure must that be which takes away this reverence for law, which breaks in upon all the guards of justice, which throws down the defences of good faith and of national integrity, which leads the people to suppose that equity, fidelity, political truth are words possessing no force, nor meaning, nor moment? The people are not likely to rise higher in the justice of their ideas, or the purity of their practise, than their rulers. Can that republic long survive where all those general principles, which God has ordained for the safety of individuals and the prosperity of nations, are scouted and overthrown? Here is a law which repudiates solemn moral obligation. It casts contempt upon the sacredness of treaties. It sets at nought all the compacts and agreements which have been entered into by Slavery, by which it has gained its advantages, and without which it could not have survived to the present day. It overrides and breaks down all the guarantees of freedom contained in the Constitution. It shocks the common sense, still more the religious sense of the nation. It reverses entirely the fundamental policy of the Republic from the beginning till now. It leads the people to suppose that government is simply a system of artful schemes; that politics is a game; that there are no immutable laws of rectitude, applicable here; that all divine sentiments of justice and mercy are intrusive and impertinent here; that any thing is fair, any thing legal, any thing allowable, if it can only be carried, and made popular. It is impossible to conceive of a law better fitted to confuse the moral sense, and weaken all bonds of moral obligation—to cast the whole people adrift upon a shifting and shoreless sea of temporary expedients and time-serving policies.

I have already said that this law overthrows and re-

verses the entire policy of the nation from the outset. This is a point which demands more particular attention. I remark, therefore,

2. It is a wicked and unjust law because it produces this mournful and astounding revolution. This Republic was founded to secure the inalienable rights of man. After the prolonged and anxious study of profound minds, our present form of government was devised to establish justice, to promote the general welfare, to perpetuate liberty, to secure universal equality and the enjoyment of universal privileges. This is the express declaration of the Constitution. Whatever has been the practice of our rulers, this has been the general interpretation of the nation's fundamental law.—No one has supposed that the Constitution was designed to favor an aristocracy, to strengthen an oligarchy, to introduce exclusiveness, monopolies and special privileges; to give to a few rich men, holding slaves, the power to control a nation who did not hold them.

But the Nebraska Law introduces a new reading of the Constitution, it makes the prohibition of Slavery unconstitutional, it makes Slavery propagandism the design of our government, and the rule of our legislators. All this is a bold and amazing innovation.

The universal doctrine of all parties hitherto has been, that Congress had power to prohibit Slavery in the territories. This was the ordinance of 1787, adopted before the Constitution and ratified by the Constitution—an ordinance under which Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, came into the Union as free States, when, without it, they would infallibly have been slave States. This was the doctrine of the Missouri restriction of 1820, by which Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas were dedicated to freedom, now to be fraudulently wrenched away by Slavery's usurping grasp.—



This was the doctrine of the law of 1848, passed by a Democratic Congress, signed by a Southern President, by which Oregon and Washington were organized, prohibiting Slavery and welcoming Freedom. Up to the agitation of the Nebraska Bill, for the sixty-five years of our confederation, this doctrine was never denied by a Southern man. Even Calhoun himself never demanded more than the line of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ . Jefferson himself originated the North-western Ordinance, and every Southern vote was given for it. Search the writings of all distinguished Southern men up to 1854, you will not find a letter, or speech, or essay, or judicial decision which denies this doctrine. Jefferson, Madison, Lowndes, Cheves, Randolph, Pinckney, Livingston, Jackson, Calhoun, Clay, Grundy, Forsyth, Wirt, Chief Justice Marshall, Chief Justice Taney, all the eminent statesmen and jurists of the South, admit it again and again. I need not say that the great Northern luminaries, Hamilton, the two Adamsses, Story, Kent, Daniel Webster, Silas Wright, Levi Woodbury, have never held any other doctrine. But now, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, in the 65th year of our confederated Union, and the 78th year of our Independence, it is suddenly discovered by Stephen A. Douglas and Franklin Pierce that the prohibition of Slavery in the territories is unconstitutional and illegal.

Is not this a startling, unauthorized, portentous revolution? Is not this a retreat from the blessed light of Freedom to the darkness of the middle ages? Is it not the surrender of that which has thus far constituted one chief glory of this Republic, and the adoption of that which has been the infamy and the consuming canker in all old world tyrannies?

Our national policy and national pledges, with regard to these Northern regions, have been uniform, univer-

sally acceded to, proposed first by the South, sustained with not a solitary dissentient from the South. All they have ever claimed has been, "Give us the line of 36° 30'." Here is a startling and stupendous revolution in the policy of the nation, contradictory to all republican principles, to all the compacts, ordinances and laws of sixty-five years, to all the opinions of great men both North and South. It is ominous of the boldest aggressions and the most fearful usurpations on the part of Slavery in the future. It is blasphemous to the memory of the Fathers — it is defiant to the law of God — it is contemptuous to the sentiments of humanity which dwell in gentle bosoms. The greatest work of the nation is by this single blow undone, and the life of the nation slain. The basis of our liberties is now knocked away from under our feet. The chief bar to the progress of despotism is taken down. New States wider than the old thirteen, to become more populous, and more powerful than the present Republic — a realm mightier in all the elements of greatness than Napoleon ever subdued, or Nicholas ever governed, is to be given up to all the woes and disabilities of an inexorable and grinding bondage. Slavery has been only tolerated in the nation thus far — now it is triumphant. The Constitution has been against it — the public sentiment of the nation has been against it — the rule of justice and the power of religion have been against it. The principles of democracy, and the law of God, and the civilization of the age have been profoundly hostile to it. — The heroism and the faith of those sainted Puritan worthies have been its foe. The literature of the gifted in mind and the loving in heart — in its various forms of poetry, philosophy, theology, ethics, and art — has been its foe. With such an antagonism before it and around it, Slavery has at times seemed abashed, and

likely to be defeated, but now, simply through the force of political intrigue, not by the power of truth or religion, or equity, or love, it has become bold, confident, overweening, overbearing, boastful, insolent; and the whole North, with all the precious liberties of the present, and all the glorious hopes of the future, have become the footstool of its pride. The general government is no longer in conflict with Slavery. Slavery and Freedom have entered into alliance. The lion and the lamb have lain down together — the lion with keen forecastings of the future, the lamb with a silly confidence of impunity — until the lion shall become hungry and the lamb careless, when the beast of prey will eat up its unsuspecting victim, without any compunction, and without any loss of appetite.

The principle of prohibition having been disavowed and removed by Congress, the South are now relieved from a terrible fear. They have been afraid of public opinion — they have been afraid of the odium cast upon their institutions by prohibitory legislation. But now there is to be no further stigma or reproach cast upon oppression by the authorities of the land. There is to be no further public legislative testimony that Slavery is an evil and a wrong. There is to be no further prophecy or promise of its removal in any of the distant ages. The whole public sentiment and expectation are to be reversed, and Slavery shall become a perpetual incubus upon the nation, an undying curse to the world. Slavery has thus achieved a mighty and melancholy triumph, melancholy for all the interests of the country, hopeful only for the machinations of the wicked, and for the conspiracies of despotism in the earth.

It is said by some that, as all compromises are now annulled, Slavery and Freedom are at last matched for an equal contest — that the forces are marshalled, the



battle is pitched, the trumpets are sounded, we have a free field, a fair fight, and no odds. No odds! who can say it, or think it, when the laws are revolutionized; when the public sentiment is poisoned and perverted; when the national conscience is drugged by opiates, or intoxicated by stimulants, or silenced by threats; when freemen are slumbering over their dangers; and parties, and factions, and intriguers, and demagogues are allowed to inaugurate their schemes under the catchwords of liberty and popular rights. No odds! It seems to me that oppression at last has all the odds — that Slavery has fought its mightiest battle and won the field — that the forces of Freedom, instead of being summoned to the conflict by the clarion call of hope, are in full retreat, and that the mournful, funereal wail of defeat is on the air. The sun of Austerlitz has risen upon Slavery. It may be possible, God grant it may be so, to rally the hosts of Freedom for future struggles, but now they are under the dark cloud of despondency and defeat.

3. It is a wicked and dangerous Law because it renders aid to the plottings of the Romish hierarchy.

Every thing indicates that there is a struggle coming on in this country between the principles of Protestant liberty and Romish power. Romanism is intolerant in all its doctrines and spirit, and already the bludgeon, the slungshot, the brickbat, the church and the dwelling stocked with arms, show that it is swiftly becoming a bloody persecutor, even in this free country and in this liberal age. It is not alone the Brooklyn and Chelsea riots, but scenes and movements occurring in almost every city and large village of our land, which are omens of an approaching and desperate collision between Protestantism and Catholicism in this Republic. But what I wish especially to remark in this connexion is, the alliance between Slavery and the Roman Catholic religion

in this strife. Their spirit is one, the spirit of bigotry and intolerance in Church and State, the spirit of dictation over the conscience and over politics. Their principles are in perfect harmony, principles which establish an aristocracy, which introduce special privileges, which perpetuate the power of caste. Their aims are identical, the purpose to set up their own ascendancy, and to subject all opinions and interests to their rule. We are to come under the subtle and fatal arts of Jesuitism — the pious frauds, the detestable casuistry, the horrible usurpations of the Romish hierarchy. And here Slavery and Romanism have joined hands in firmest league — there is a perfect understanding between them; and their whole mutual influence is to be combined and employed each for the support of the other. This is shown by the whole Catholic vote at the last election, by the course of Bishop Hughes, by the astounding proclamations of Brownson; by the position of the entire Romish priesthood, not a man of whom signed the protest against the Nebraska Bill, not a man of whom gives his voice or his vote against the extension and perpetuity of Slavery; and by the uniform tenor of the Catholic journals which are constant and insidious in their assaults upon republican liberty, and in their defence of Slavery's demands. If there be any jugglery which can be practised upon the mind, or any brutal cruelty which can afflict the body, or any menace or terror which can subjugate the soul, or any unequal form of government which can take from the people sacred and inalienable rights, each of these powers are equally ready to use them, and with conspiracy of plan and combination of effort, are now banded together to use them. The Nebraska Law gives to both these forces an immense advantage, wrenching away from the hands of Freedom one of her most potent weapons of defence, and placing

in the hands of Slavery and of Romanism a two-edged dagger with which to stab liberty to the heart.

4. It is a wicked and most pernicious Law because it introduces a bitter and eternal feud between the North and the South. The South have taken a position from which they cannot retreat without pusillanimity and shame. All their chivalry, and sensitive pride, and former vauntings will utterly forbid their retreat. They have now for the first time claimed all the territory as their own — opened to them by the Constitution — never again to be shut. This is a claim which they cannot yield without an acknowledgement of weakness, and folly, and treachery, and crime. The robber, who seizes upon his neighbor's farm, pretending that he has a prior title,— whose conscience is so far seared, and whose generous sensibilities are so far extinguished that he can make the claim,—will never afterwards retreat from it, for that would be to brand himself, before the world, as a thief and a villain — he will push the claim to the farthest bounds of litigation and quarrel. So it will be with the South, they will not yield the assumption of the Nebraska Law.

It is equally plain that the North will never grant that assumption and claim. Unless the North are prepared to surrender their God-given heritage and rights, their freedom and their religion, and to put their necks, like the patient ox, under the yoke, to wear the collar of their master, and to draw in harness, they will resist this arrogant claim presented in the Nebraska Law, and resist it to the end. Kansas and Nebraska, and all the Northern territories belong to Freedom by every law of God and man, by every principle of honor and of right, and if there be any of the old Puritan spirit left in human souls, if there be any drop of revolutionary blood running in the veins of this generation, freemen will



hold those territories. And here are new seeds of bitterness and strife, of jealousy and dislike, of competition, and collision, and fratricidal war sown between the slave States and the free. It is not likely that the North and the South can continue to be friends — they are no longer brethren but foes. “Mason and Dixon’s line” is to be a word of ominous and terrible import. Compromises, concessions, and conciliation are now abolished, and cannot be restored. Treachery and robbery, on the one side, forbid the exercise of confidence on the other. The North have been betrayed, their brotherly affection and trust have been abused. Promises have been broken, and treaties have been scorned. How can they again hold out the white flag, or send hostages, or make a truce? The battle rages, and must rage until either Freedom or Slavery dies. It is deplorable and dreadful beyond expression, to have discord introduced between brethren of one blood, of one religion, of one republic, bound together by hallowed associations of the past, and holy obligations of the present, and glorious possibilities of the future. Imagination pictures at once the awful scenes of disunion and civil war, and memory brings up those solemn and thrilling words of Webster in the great Hayne debate — “When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time, the sun in Heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious union ; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent ; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be in fraternal blood. Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable

interrogatory as, what is all this worth? nor those other words of delusion and folly—liberty first and union afterwards; but every where spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea, and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment dear to every American heart, Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable.”

If it be not too late, we would entreat the South, as brethren, as Christian brethren, by the fraternity of lineage, and government, and education and hopes, to forego their purpose with regard to the territories, and the future destinies of Freedom in our land; and if oppression must, to some extent, paralyze the limbs of this gigantic empire of States, to leave the heart, and the head, untouched by the terrible apoplexy, so that life may still dwell in this continental frame, and the vital currents moving briskly at the centre, may flow out, though it be with impeded and more feeble course, to the uttermost extremities. The bones of their fathers and ours lie on many a battle field, where the historian gathers his most precious memorials, and where the patriot pauses to weep. There is no discord in that grave. Those bones lie in loving embrace. That ancestral blood, Northern and Southern alike, was shed for Freedom. Those bones, crumbling and mingling in perfect amity, were the deep foundation of popular and universal liberty. Can it be that the chivalrous and ardent sons of the South are now willing, with fratricidal and suicidal hands, to pull down that stupendous fabric of republicanism, which was thus built up and cemented? Let them unite with us in repealing the Nebraska Law, in giving all the territories and future States to Freedom; in abolishing the Fugitive Slave Law; in extending and strengthening the rule of Free-

dom; in regarding Slavery as an evil institution, finally to be extinguished by the blended forces of Christ's religion, public opinion, legislative enactment, and universal consent; then shall our empire stand, and the glories of our Freedom shall endure, so long as the world shall roll in its orbit. I inquire —

II. What advantages will be secured to the South by the Nebraska Law?

1. It establishes a principle which they profess to value more than any practical results — that principle is, that Slavery shall never be prohibited hereafter from any territory where they wish to carry it! It puts up an effectual and a permanent bar against any future Wilmot Proviso, no matter whether in Arctic lands where wheat alone can grow, or in torrid climes where cotton, and sugar, and rice are indigenous. Mr. Webster defeated the application of the proviso to New Mexico, but he placed his action solely upon the ground of geographical position, of mountainous localities, and frigid climate, and unproductive soil. But the South have never been satisfied with that ground of action, it was liable to slide out from beneath their feet, like an avalanche of mountain snow from under a summer sun. So they have now procured a law which holds the prohibition of Slavery unconstitutional every where, North, South, East, West, in the airs of perpetual congelation or under the sun of Cuba, on the spurs of the Rocky Mountains, or in the valleys of the Missouri, and the Columbia rivers,— unconstitutional, although it is a prohibition which has been maintained by express law and by solemn compact from the formation of the government to the hour of the passage of the Nebraska Bill. This, in their view, makes the matter secure, and now all future purchases, conquests, annexations, divisions of Territories or States are wholly relieved from



this peril. Texas which was destined to have five States, four of them slave, and one free, now gets the whole for Slavery. California, capable of making four States like Ohio, will undoubtedly have two of them, if not three, slave States. Utah, large enough for five States like Ohio, all of them North of the Missouri line, will all be given to Slavery. Kansas will be carved into six or seven slave States. Here is a probable increase of fifteen or sixteen slave States, reckoning nothing for the future division of New Mexico, nothing for the bringing in of Cuba, nothing for the ravaging of Mexico proper — and all this extension of Slavery was solemnly and forever prohibited before the passage of the Nebraska Bill. Think you the South had not an eagle eye open to these consequences? Think you they did not regard these results as an immense advantage? They were not likely to speak of these results in their Congress speeches, for secrecy, and subtlety, and silence as to all these schemes have been their policy from the first. — Like the arch tempter when he talked to Eve of open vision, and added knowledge and increased wisdom, when he meant only degradation, and sin and the knowledge of woe, so these men talk pleasantly of self-government, of non-intervention, of popular sovereignty, when they mean Slavery sovereignty and popular vassalage.

2. Another advantage which they seek, and which they are likely to gain, is, that they may have the household labor, if not the plantation labor, of slaves in those Northern Territories. I know it is said that those regions do not bear cotton and rice, and that therefore slave labor would be unprofitable there and cannot go there. I know of no reason why a black man cannot plough a hill-side, and hoe a field of corn, and reap a field of wheat, and dig a field of potatoes as well as a white man. These products may not be raised for ex-

port and for profit so much as cotton, sugar, tobacco, rice, but I believe that slaveholders if they owned Northern farms would employ their slaves upon them, and would accomplish all the ends of slave-holding as they do now. I believe that when Slavery was abolished in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, it was not on account of the unprofitableness of slave-labor, but because the sentiments of humanity and religion dwelt in the bosoms of men. I believe that it is this alone which will ever abolish Slavery in any province. Slavery may be unprofitable, as despotism is unprofitable, and as all wickedness is unprofitable, but this does not abolish it. It may impoverish a nation or a State, while still the slave-holders (who form only a small minority of the nation) may grind the faces of the poor, and fatten upon the spoils of the many, and grow rich while the country is sinking into decay. A large proportion of the slaves, even at the South, are household and body servants, cooks, chamber maids, waiters, coachmen, hostlers, bootblacks, performing every menial office, engaged in these and other forms of manual toil. Now, no one pretends that these services will be deemed any less necessary, or any less profitable at the North than at the South. Take away the obligations of religion, and humane feeling, and plighted national faith, and express enactment, and manly honor, and Kansas and Nebraska will be overrun with this class of slaves. Every man who is rich enough to own a splendid house and farm, and who accepts Southern doctrine as to human rights, will have his household slaves, his garden slaves, and in all probability his field laborers will be slaves.

The opinion has widely prevailed that Slavery could only exist under a Southern sun. Slaveholders have resisted this opinion — with bold and unblushing front they have maintained that it was conservative of refine-



ment and intellectual power in society, that it was the very corner stone of republicanism, and that without it our unchecked democracy at the North would rush into anarchy and wild misrule. They have undertaken a crusade against liberty, and have become Slavery propagandists. With infinite subtlety, and skill, and with amazing success, they have repressed and overthrown anti-slavery sentiment, in many minds, especially among politicians, at the North. They have now broken down all barriers which the Constitution, and the compacts and laws of the fathers had thrown in their way; and they are determined to show that Slavery can be planted, and acclimated, can live, and grow, and thrive, on the mountain declivities, and under the colder airs of a more Northern clime. Apparently they will succeed in this. Assuredly they will, unless the public sentiment of the free States is now universally aroused, and united, and firm, saying to the onrolling surges, the ocean tides of oppression, "hitherto, and no further." Let it be remembered that there are other motives beside the greed of gold which will carry Slavery into a province, and make it perpetual there. Mere covetousness is one of the weakest of all the motives which support oppression. There is the lust of power, the love of ease, the hungering after luxuries, and means of display, the ambition of belonging to an aristocracy, the fierceness of appetite and passion, the triumph of those who, in a national conflict, gain the victory for their own views — almost every proud, ambitious, selfish, sensual, hateful feeling, which can rule in the bosoms of men, urge them on in their career. But I have not yet shown the full extent to which the greed of gold urges them.

3. The South have opened Kansas and Nebraska to the ingress of Slavery more that they might have the profits of slave-breeding than the profits of slave-labor.

Shocking as is the thought, this is one of the chief sources of wealth in the Northern range of slave States, and will be in the new Territories. As our merchants sell their silks and their woollens, their groceries and their iron ware, making an honest support, sometimes an honorable fortune out of these exchanges, so do multitudes of the southerners, (bating all the honor) with as little compunction and with as keen an eye to trade, sell the souls and the bodies of beings made in the image of God's intelligence and immortality. As horses are one of the chief staples of Vermont, and sheep of New Hampshire, and cattle of Ohio, raised and trained and fattened for the market, so will men and women be one of the chief staples of Kansas and Nebraska. This it is to reduce man to the condition of a chattel — to make human flesh, and blood, and bones, and sinews, and intellect, and affection, and even piety, a marketable commodity — to make the power of maternity reckon for its money's worth, and to raise the price on woman according to the degree of her beauty, her health, and her youth. The slave trade between Africa and America has long been branded as piracy and crime, and punished by imprisonment, confiscation, infamy and death.— But here is a slave-trade, if not marked with all the horrors and agonies of the middle passage, yet marked with dreadful scenes at which the heart shudders, and from which the conscience, in its profoundest convictions, revolts. Here is the human auction block, with men and women and children around it, chained in gangs, led away in coffles, with the slave-trader rudely, and roughly, and indecently examining them, as the butcher his bullocks for the stall. Here is the rending of family ties, the wail of bereaved parents, going to more than a living death — the anguish of orphaned children, on whom no friendly eye will hereafter look,

and to whom, in the tender years of unprotected childhood, no mercy will be shown. Here are husbands and wives, whose bosoms are filled with desolation, whose hearts are breaking with the consciousness that they shall see each others faces no more. Here are daughters and sisters to whom love is a mockery, and virtue an impossibility, and all chaste, delicate, womanly feelings a source of unutterable distress; and they are to be dragged away to the arms of licentious excess, and then left to the inflictions of sated appetite and malignant hate. Surely, we need not transfer the terrible realities of the African slave-trade to our soil, in order to stir the pulses of our blood; for here, in this noon of the nineteenth century, under the shield and the professions of Republicanism, under the outward glosses and varnish of civilization, and refinement, are hidden all these cruelties and agonies. And these are to be the inheritance of Kansas and Nebraska; and hence in future years, from the very shadow and by the power of democratic institutions are to be driven unhappy slaves, to the wasting toils, and the weary pains, and the unutterable wrongs of Southern plantations. In the eloquent words of another, "thousands of human beings, with human sensibilities and affections, and with human rights divinely given, are to be torn from their native soil, and carried by ruthless force to toil, not for themselves, but for their owners, in distant regions where the dim hope of freedom, under which they were born, can never overtake them. The blood and treasure of our common country shall be expended for the acquisition of Territories in which, with the full consent of the national government, now pledged before hand, new markets shall be opened for the slave-trade. Every steamer floating down the Mississippi shall bear upon its decks despairing exiles, driven from all that their



poor hearts clung to in their bondage. Slave ships, freighted with woe, and black with omens of God's wrath to come, shall vex with their abhorred keels the waters of the Southern Gulf. In lands that might have been enriched with the blessings, and adorned with the beauty of a Christian civilization, there shall be the fierce barbarism that tramples the poor into the earth and robs the laborer of his wages. Children shall be torn from their parents at the need or the caprice of an owner — women shall be sold for their beauty at public auction — and to teach the alphabet shall be a crime." Such are the scenes to which an infatuated Congress and executive have opened this fair land, and every one at the North, however humble his station, however small his influence, who does not protest, with all the earnestness and force which God has given him against this stupendous and heaven-daring crime, is responsible for all this guilt.

4. The slave-holders expect to gain, and have gained, by this law an indefinite augmentation of political power. This has been the great object of their ambition for more than half a century. Freedom and Slavery, from the first, have been maintaining an unavoidable conflict and competition. Freedom has been growing peacefully, fraternally, by the means of Nature's appointment, and by the law of human industry, economy and virtue. With a less area of country, whether in the States or the Territories — with a climate less salubrious, and a soil less fertile — with more difficult access to the ocean, and with fewer facilities for trade and travel by navigable streams — Freedom has nevertheless swiftly outrun Slavery in all the elements of greatness. The free States have outgrown the slave States in numbers, and wealth, and education, and enterprise, and all that constitutes the glory of a nation. The North at

this hour has three-fourths of the free population, five-sixths of the producing capacity, nearly all the ships, the commerce and the mechanic arts. The North furnishes to the South most of her teachers, and most of her enterprising, business men. The free States have not only sustained themselves, and provided for their own welfare, they have been emphatically the nursery of mind and of science to the South.

The only point in which the slave States have held on in equal course with the North has been in political power. This has been the object of their constant plottings and their most strenuous efforts, and in this point they have been successful. The men of the South — the educated, the genteel, the aristocratic — are politicians from their childhood up. It is their study by day and their dream by night to attain office and honor in the general government, and to gain the control of national affairs. They have nothing else to do. Work is not in their line — their plantations take care of them and theirs. Agriculture, manufactures, trade, are to them ignoble employments — they were not born to toil. Even professorships in literary institutions are beneath their ambition. The South furnishes but very few authors. They are gentlemen at large — and, when you confine them to a more restricted sphere, they are guardians of the nation. Some of them are travellers, and make observations abroad, but only to show their wisdom at home in transplanting the principles of foreign despotism to the uncongenial soil of a Republic, and in rendering plausible the paradoxes of tyranny to the minds of a democracy. Their energy and ingenuity are spent upon politics. Politics is their business and politics their rest — politics their study and politics their play — politics their meat and politics their drink. It would be strange if they had not attained to singular



skill in political chicanery. With weakness, degeneracy, decay written on all their institutions and their domestic condition, they have still held with a firm and tenacious grasp, through storms and through calms, the helm of National affairs. They have furnished more presidents, more cabinet officers, more executive and judicial incumbents, more diplomatic charges and plenipotentiaries, more exalted functionaries of every kind than the North. They secured in the outset an advantage by slave representation. They have kept up their proportion of States, have had an equality in the Senate, and have always been able by intrigue and cajolery, by availing themselves of the dissensions of the North, and by perfect combination among themselves, and last, not least, by threats of bloodshed and disunion, to carry any favorite measure. Time and again have they hindered the introduction of free States into the Union, that each might be accompanied by a slave State — thus was Michigan compelled to wait for Arkansas, and Iowa, and Wisconsin for Florida and Texas. Having for a long time maintained the balance of power, they have now, at last, carried a measure which secures to them the preponderance, and so far as we can now judge, will give them the preponderance forever. I have already said that if the Territories are hereafter divided into States of the size of Ohio, the Nebraska Bill gives at least fifteen of those States, seven in Kansas, five in Utah, one in Texas, and two in California to Slavery — and all those had been consecrated from the time of the Missouri Compromise in 1820 to Freedom, unqualifiedly and forever. The Nebraska Bill also takes off the restriction from seven States in Nebraska, and four in Minnesota, which some may regard as doubtful on account of climate and soil, but which I cannot myself regard as otherwise than doom-

ed to the slave power. Add to these, five States in New Mexico, and three more in Texas, and you have thirty-four in all, to be counterbalanced only by nine in Oregon and Washington. This is the future before our country — thirty-four new States for Slavery, and nine for Freedom; and who supposes that when California and Oregon and Washington are thus cut off from all the approaches and influences of Freedom, and girdled around by the blighting and domineering power of Slavery, that they will long remain in the category of the free? The tactics of the South are perfectly Napoleonic — pouring their forces, in condensed volume, upon the centre of Freedom's line, breaking that, then turning and winning an easy victory over either wing, first over Oregon, Washington, and California, next over Ohio, New York, and Massachusetts. Vary the foregoing estimate a little, and without reckoning a division of the Territories, take them as they are, and regard each as a single State. Before the recent law, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas and Utah were to be reckoned for Freedom and New Mexico alone for Slavery — six for Freedom and one for Slavery. Now, New Mexico, Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, are for Slavery, and Oregon and Washington alone for Freedom — five for oppression and two for liberty, and those two soon to be dragooned by force or by fraud into the regular army of slave States.— Slavery is our master. Unless the Nebraska Law can be immediately repealed, and the Missouri restriction again imposed, Slavery has gained a vast, and overwhelming preponderance, never again to be broken, and the future of our country is dark and gloomy indeed. We are to come under a despotism more cruel, unfaltering, inexorable in its purpose than that of Rome in the days of her profligacy, after the Republic became

extinct, and when the Empire was hastening to decay. The slave States have at length accomplished their threat, which they made when Arkansas was about to be received into the Union, that, if their demands were not complied with, they "would carry Slavery into the heart of the North." That bold and startling menace was met by Caleb Cushing, then a representative from Massachusetts, in the following manner:—

"I am charged with memorials from citizens of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, remonstrating against that clause in the Constitution of Arkansas which makes Slavery perpetual. This provision of the Constitution of Arkansas is condemned by them as anti-republican, as wrong on general principles of civil polity, and as unjust to the inhabitants of non-slaveholding States. \* \* I concur in reprobating such a clause. I cannot by any vote of mine ratify or sanction a Constitution of government which undertakes in this way to foreclose in advance the progress of civilization and of liberty forever. \* \* \* It has been declared that if members from the North held themselves not engaged by the terms of the compromise under which Missouri entered into the Union, neither would members from the South hold themselves engaged thereby—and that if we sought to impose restrictions on slave property on the one hand, they might be impelled on the other hand, to introduce Slavery into the heart of the North. Introduce Slavery into the heart of the North! Vain idea! Invasion, pestilence, civil war may conspire to exterminate the eight millions of free spirits who now dwell there. This in the long lapse of ages is possible to happen.—You may raze to the earth the thronged cities, the industrious villages, the peaceful hamlets of the North. You may lay waste its fertile valleys and verdant hill-sides. You may plant its very soil with salt, and consign it to everlasting desolation. You may transform its beautiful surface into a desert, as bare as the blank face of the sands of Sahara. You may reach the realization of the infernal boast with which Attila the Hun marched his barbaric hosts into Italy, demolishing whatever there is of civilization or prosperity in the happy dwellings of the North, and reducing their very substance to powder, so that a squadron of cavalry shall gallop over the site of populous cities, unimpeded as the wild steeds on the Savannahs of the West. All this you may do—it is within the bounds of physical possibility. But I solemnly assure every gentleman within the sound of my voice, I proclaim to the country and to the world, that until all this be fully accomplished unto the uttermost



extremity of the letter, you cannot, you *shall* not introduce Slavery into the heart of the North.”

And this from Caleb Cushing who is now the arch conspirator in concocting and carrying through this very Nebraska measure, and thus introducing Slavery into the heart of the North! How art thou fallen, son of the morning!

It may be said, and it is said by the advocates of the Nebraska Law, that it opens the Territory to Freedom as much as to Slavery, and that it simply leaves the question to the people themselves. There is here an attempt to practice a glaring deception upon the general mind. The Bill does not leave the Territory equally open to free settlers and to slave-holders. Ten thousand freemen may go in there and purchase and occupy lands, and by their side five slave-holders may go in and settle with one hundred slaves each, and the five slave-holders can forever defeat the freemen, and override and nullify any decision or legislation which they may make.

The way in which this will come about is perfectly plain. Suppose that those ten thousand men choose a legislature, all devoted to the principles of Freedom, and they ordain a law prohibiting Slavery. The five slave-holders will at once carry the matter before the judges, and will say the act of Congress allows us to come in here without let or hindrance, with our slaves. Here are our farms, our houses, our furniture, our equipage, our personal property, and five hundred slaves, worth half a million of dollars, and this legislature, by one rash blow, have robbed us of half a million of money. It is an unconstitutional and an invalid enactment. The judges, not chosen by the people, but appointed by the government at Washington would so decide. Suppose an appeal taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, a majority of whom are Southern

men — they would infallibly affirm the decision of the territorial judges, and pronounce the territorial law null and void. This is the universal interpretation of the Constitution now at the South, that wherever Slavery is not expressly prohibited by a law of Congress, or of a sovereign State, there slaves may be held by the power of the Constitution, and there freemen may whistle — they have no control, though ten thousand men should stand against five, or a hundred thousand against five. The South knew very well what they were about in arranging this matter, and in all that they said about popular sovereignty. This very point was expressly brought before them by proposed amendment to the Nebraska Bill, in the Senate by Mr. Chase, of Ohio, in the House by Messrs. Mace, of Indiana, and Fuller, of Maine, and it was proposed that, in this matter of the prohibition, or the permission of Slavery, the territorial legislature should have direct and sole control, without appeal to governors, or courts, the immediate or the ultimate. This would have been popular sovereignty — that is, the sovereignty of the settlers who might happen to be there, though not the sovereignty of the whole nation which is the true popular sovereignty — but even this the South voted down in solid column, without a scruple and without a wherefore.

There is another way in which the Nebraska Bill provides for the defeat of any territorial law prohibiting Slavery, viz: by the veto of the governor. The Bill provides for a territorial legislature of thirty-nine men, thirteen in the Council or Senate, twenty-six in the Assembly, and for an executive board of seven men, a governor, and secretary, three justices, an attorney general and a marshall, all these to be appointed by the executive at Washington, and over every act of the legislature the governor has his veto. He makes the census;



arranges the districts ; apportions the members ; assigns the time of election ; has a voice in determining the choice of all town and county officers ; has all the patronage and influence which such a position gives him ; and then has a power of veto over every legislative act. Mr. Douglas iterates and reiterates, ad nauseam, the statement, that "the governor, judges, and other officers, appointed at Washington, are officers of the general government." But why should they have a veto over territorial enactments, why should they have a voice in the choice of town and county officers, why should they have the interpretation and decision of territorial laws, if they are *only* officers of the general government ? It is plain that their legislative functions, in the outset of an infant republic, are far more important than their executive. Mr. Douglas may be somewhat skilful in throwing dust in people's eyes, but he must be voluntarily blind who does not see that the governors and judges of Kansas and Nebraska can legalize Slavery and shut out Freedom from those new colonies with almost infallible certainty. For this reason it is that I deem the power of a free emigration from Worcester or Lowell, or any part of New England, over this question but very slight. I would not discourage emigration, but encourage it to the utmost possible extent. And yet though freemen should go by thousands and tens of thousands, and be able, by large majorities, to carry the popular vote, they would find Slavery entrenched there before them, and by malign, subtle, irresponsible, intangible, uncontrollable power baffling all their efforts.

Non-intervention established by this law ! It is the most glaring deception ever attempted to be practised upon an intelligent people. It intervenes from the outset, and at every step, in the most direct and efficient

ways, for Slavery, and against Freedom. Popular sovereignty ! it is the overthrow of every just idea which that word denotes. It gives the destinies of a mighty realm of country which is to be more populous, and if Freedom be its guide and shield, more powerful than the empire which the Cæsars swayed — it gives all the magnificent and solemn destinies of those untrodden savannahs, and the countless multitudes who shall hereafter inhabit there, into the keeping of the President at Washington. The formation of infant institutions, and of germinating laws for this garden of North America, for this centre of the world's hopes, is one of magnitude and moment enough to awaken the thought and the discussion of this whole nation, and to bring out the profoundest counsels of our most instructed sages, of our most gifted and wisest men ; and yet a Congress, chosen before one single constituency of the nation knew that this question was to be agitated, throws it from them, and, with rash inconsideration and deplorable haste, gives it into the hands of a few transient, haphazard settlers, or rather of an irresponsible executive, and his board of seven. And thus is the bright and blessed light of Freedom quenched over all those Territories, and the mournful and malignant eclipse of Slavery made to cover them,—and not only them, but to draw its dreadful veil of darkness, gradually growing deeper and deeper, over the whole land.—O, Republic ! highly favored, for which so many thanksgivings have been rendered to Heaven, and so many prayers offered, to which so many longing eyes, and fainting hearts, and trembling hopes of the oppressed in other lands are turning, what delusion is this which is betraying thee to thy ruin ? What infatuation possesses thy rulers, that they should follow the comet's track, and not the sun's bright light ! that they should

wander off where Slavery beguiles, and not persevere where Freedom leads !

Non-intervention ! If it were not a false and treacherous plea, it would still be an absurd, unfortunate and dangerous one ; for this is a question which belongs to the whole nation. The Territories are their property, and the Constitution gives them entire control. Acting through their representatives in Congress they are to make all needful regulations. Until a sovereign State be formed, they have a potent influence. As well might the father abdicate his authority over an inexperienced minor, and say to him — “ the world is wide — the care of you is too much trouble — whether you walk in the paths of virtue or vice, of happiness or ruin, I will not intervene — go your ways, and follow your bent.”

Non-intervention in the great and solemn strife between freedom and oppression, between civilization and barbarism, between equitable government and an iniquitous, tyrannous, iron-handed rule — no doctrine, more unwise, could be devised. Here is a mighty tract of unoccupied Territory, spread out before the nation, for them to enter and improve. All its future institutions, interests, destinies are now to be decided. It is in the hands of our Congress for weal or for woe. Opposite influences are struggling for the ascendancy — opposite agencies are seeking to possess it and rule over it. On the one hand, Slavery is stretching out its greedy and cruel hand — on the other, Freedom says give it to me. On the one side, Ignorance, Imbecility, Brutality, Discord, Lust, stand grouped together, in fearful attitude and with horrid intent, crouched like blood-thirsty tigers waiting for their prey, saying let us spring upon this free land, and strike our fangs into this infant nation. On the other side are Knowledge, Intellectual Strength, Refinements, Harmony, Industry, Peace, Love,



Virtue, Religion, saying let us enter, and make this the home of bliss. At this juncture, Congress suddenly exclaims, "non-intervention! non-intervention!" Truly, this is a wonderful discovery of a wonderful age — something new in the administration of law, and the maintenance of righteous government. If Satan were to be elected president of all Republics, and sovereign of all kingdoms, he might well exclaim, this is a grand and an admirable principle. He might say take away your Bible, and your Sabbaths — take away your restraints of truth, and power, and grace — begone with your divine interpositions, and undesirable restrictions — abolish all divine laws, and all human codes. *Non-intervention* is the word for me. Let the natural heart have its way — throw the reins on the neck of the passions — give to evil full swing — I hold to squatter sovereignty — I ask for no legislative enactments to hinder men from doing wrong.

Why, what are legislatures for? What is the sole design of the institution of Congress? Is it not to throw restrictions around that which is evil, and to furnish encouragements to that which is good? Is it not to fetter and curb the aggressive spirit of oppression, and to give new scope and help to Freedom? If non-intervention be the true principle, then give it full play, and follow it to its legitimate results. Send home your Congressmen — abolish your legislatures — repudiate laws — disband your courts — break down the judge's bench — demolish the halls of high debate — trail the sacred symbols of justice in the dust — dissolve your magistracies and governments — open your prisons — take off restraints upon crime — give free and unrestricted license to human propensities — tell men, and especially all oppressors and villains, that they are free to act as they please. If non-intervention be the word, then follow it to its bitter and dreadful end. If it be

not the word, nor the principle, in this sin-ruined world — if it be not the rule for a just, high-minded, intelligent, free people — then maintain the Missouri restriction in Nebraska; open that land to laws which will encourage liberty; preserve that garden of incomparable beauty and inexhaustible riches for the free; introduce and execute there the law which prohibits Slavery.

III. In this solemn and portentous crisis of national affairs, what is it the duty of every Christian freeman to do? It is his duty,—

1. To pray. In the old Continental Congress, where interests had not been confederated, and hearts had not been cemented, and opinions were many and conflicting, there was no prospect of peace or conciliation but only of growing exasperations and strife, when Franklin rose and moved that God be acknowledged as a potential voice in their assembly, and that their sessions be opened daily with prayer. His proposition was accepted, and from that time on prayer became as oil upon the angry waters, and there was a calm after the turbulent storm. God has not yet abdicated his throne, and no nation can live and flourish which does not acknowledge his power. The hearts of rulers and people are in his hands, and right opinions will not be formed, and just laws will not be ordained, if Christians do not pray. The country needs God's presence, moving in the sweet and subduing influences of his truth and grace, else he will shortly come in his exterminating thunders. In the midst of our difficulties, let God proclaim his will, and our controversies shall be hushed, and our darkness dissipated. Let him speak out of the whirlwind as when Job and his friends were silenced — let him assert his own high and almighty prerogative, making known the glories of his truth and power, proclaiming his judgments and the eternal principles of his law, and the nation shall hear, and fear, and be saved.



2. It is the duty of every Christian freeman, if he has any influence, to exert it. There is no man who lives, nor woman either, who has not an influence, and it is a time when influence should be brought into exercise. When the foundations of Freedom are shaken, and persuasion, and argument, and evidence fail; when Slavery is pushing its aggressions by the power of threats and of the armed hand; when all sacred compacts and constitutional guaranties in favor of Freedom become as flax in the fire; when those concessions which patriotic and conciliatory men have made in favor of Slavery are pushed to an intolerant and monstrous construction, and become bands of steel, girding around our conscience, and crushing the iron into our soul; when justice, and truth, and love, and magnanimity, and honor take their flight, it is time for Christian freemen to awake from their slumbers, and to exert an influence. It becomes them firmly to hold, and distinctly to avow their opinions. Let those opinions be formed with much and anxious study — retrospective, looking into the history of the past, prospective, cautiously and calmly anticipating results, introspective, examining diligently the motives of the heart. Let them read the Bible, as well as the Constitution of the country. Let them familiarize themselves with great and eternal principles of right, as well as enactments of Congress, and decisions of courts, and speeches from the hustings, and editorials in the dailies. Let them consider well those doctrines of morality and laws of God, which are the only sure basis of all national strength. Let them keep in view the great and sublime land-marks on which the eye of our fathers was fixed, which have been the guide of prosperous Republics, and which alone can lead Freedom on to her ultimate triumphs. There are principles of immutable nobleness and grandeur, and no nation can be safe which does not maintain its fealty to truth,

its reverence for justice, its obedience to God, and which does not regard rectitude, virtue, goodness, magnanimity of mind as far above money, aggrandizement, indulgence, or even life. He who holds to these opinions must be ready to exert what influence he has for their diffusion. If he has a mind cultivated by study, and enriched with learning, let him express those opinions, fortified by reasons. If he has a tongue, endowed with eloquence, let him speak, in the parlor, in the streets, in the public assembly. If he holds the pen of a ready writer, let it not be idle. If he has a parent's position and power, let him instil the sentiments of Freedom into the minds of his children. If he has friends who love and esteem him, let not the might of friendship, and the urgency of loving and importunate entreaty be left untried. If he has property, let him employ that property to scatter abroad the seeds of liberty through the land, by the press, and by all wise and efficient arrangements. Let all who justify Slavery, and prostitute official influence for its support, stand alone, with the slow moving finger of disapprobation pointing to them hereafter and forever.

3. There is another resource and mode of action left for the Christian freemen of the North. It is a mode of action which is perfectly legal, entirely peaceable, and certain to be effectual. It is to employ in concert, and in thoroughness, the right of suffrage. The people in this land are as yet the sovereigns, if they choose to use their sovereignty. If they will band together, fraternally, and solemnly, and perseveringly, and vote for those men who will enact and sustain just laws, they will remedy the evil. Let it be known that all Northern Congressmen, legislators, executive and judicial officers who have proved traitors to Freedom have lost their respectability; that as politicians if they have not been guilty of wilful crime, they have made an irretriev-

able mistake (irretrievable for themselves); that they cannot any longer be trusted with office or responsibility; that there is but one thing for them to do, and that is to retire humbled, dishonored, disesteemed to private life — let this be known, and the men who speak and vote for the extension of Slavery will disappear. It is not necessary to stop to inquire whether the supporters of this Nebraska measure have been false, or only ignorant. We do not judge their motives. But it is the perfect right of the people to set aside those public servants who are incompetent, as well as those who are treacherous and criminal. The man who is not true to Freedom, in this hour of the country's peril, is a dangerous man, let his motives be what they may. Before this question all other issues sink into insignificance. Banks, subtreasuries, tariffs, railroads, internal improvements, other matters of financial and political bearing, have their importance, (I would not detract one iota from their just and legitimate consequence) but before this question they dwindle into trivialities. The problem now has become — not whether this or that party shall rule, not whether this or that measure shall triumph — but whether we shall have a genuine Republic, a free country or not? It is not whether the black race shall have their rights; but shall New England and the Northern States be free? Shall thought, and speech, and conscience, and action here be unrestricted, or fettered? Shall the principles of the Puritan Fathers be preserved? Or shall the dark and malignant wing of Slavery be stretched over all our land? Shall we continue to have an open Bible, and schools where our children may peacefully learn? Or shall religion here be put under ban, and education become a crime? Shall our families be the quiet abode of purity, virtue, friendship, industry, intelligence, love? Or shall wild pas-



sions be let loose upon us, and family ties be sundered, and domestic rights be scattered to the winds? Shall we continue under the ægis of Republicanism — life, limb, liberty, property, reputation, rights, secured by just law? Or shall the recklessness and the rage of Southern communities prevail in New England? Shall the gentle and loving spirit of humanity universally diffused, the power of piety heavenborn, and widely controlling, the reverence for inalienable rights domiciliated in all hearts, be our defence? Or shall we fall back upon the stiletto, the bowie knife, the pistol, the rifle, the energetic police, the barricaded dwelling, the gleaming eye of hatred, the horrid menaces of exasperated tongues, the duellist's code? Our choice lies between. Shall we live on under a representative government, where rulers are chosen without intrigue, or bribery, or coercion, or fear; and where legislation and administration are carried on with pure and patriotic aims? Or shall we come under the iron yoke of a despotism more cruel than that of the Czar or the Sultan? Under the rule of an oligarchy more unjust and hateful than any the world ever saw? These are the questions to be answered. And I think no mind can fail to see that all the other issues which have divided our country are secondary and subordinate to these. Henceforth let Freedom be the test, the touchstone of character by which every candidate for political office, and every incumbent of office shall be tried. No matter what his antecedents, if he be a friend of Freedom, intelligently, decisively opposed to the restriction of republican liberty, and the extension of human Slavery, if he be temperate, honest, virtuous, reliable, let him have your voice and your votes. The battle of our Independence is again to be fought. God grant it may be fought and won by the weapons of truth and by the power of love. It is



not yet too late to secure the victory by these means.— Just opinions are mightier than the edicts of tyrants, and the votes of free men are stronger than banded armies. As yet we may speak by the ballot, and thus supercede the bullet. Armed resistance is unnecessary and unwise if we can rouse the public mind and combine Freedom's forces. It becomes the duty therefore of every freeman, if he has the right of suffrage, to use it for Freedom, and persuade others to use it as they should.

There are three great remedies for political evils in this country, public opinion, the ballot, and the sword. It becomes us to use the two first, and use them earnestly and prayerfully. But suppose these two agencies fail? Suppose that the public sentiment of the North cannot be roused and rectified — suppose that the Nebraska Law cannot be repealed, and that the aggressions of Slavery cannot be checked through the ballot box and by means of peaceful legislation — what then?— This is a question which every forecasting mind is compelled to ask, what then? I know of no other remedy then, but Revolution, that is, the disunion of these confederated States. And, in all probability, that will be an impossible remedy, for if the public sentiment of the North is not adequate to the making of just laws, neither would it be adequate to the taking of a step so bold and decisive. It is the opinion of many that disunion might take place without the exasperation of feeling, the clashing of interests, or the conflicts of arms. If there is no other hope for Freedom, and if a peaceful revolution can happen, I should say for one, let it come. If Lot and Abraham cannot agree, dealing justly by each other while in confederation, let them turn, the one to the right hand, the other to the left. If Freedom and Slavery cannot live together, without Freedom's being destroyed, as were the fat kine of Egypt by

the lean, then build a wall between them, and let each hold its own. Let Freedom then take her possessions — Nebraska and Kansas which belong to her; Northern Texas, Utah, California, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, which come within her bounds; those States which border on the great lakes, already in themselves magnificent empires; our own little Northeastern States, the prolific nursery of free principles, free men, and free provinces — let her build her capital by the shores of those inland, sounding seas, where the mighty waters shall sing the eternal anthem of Freedom, where the winds which sweep over their surface shall denote the energy of enfranchised mind, where the sublime peace which sleeps upon their sunny bosom shall be an emblem of the harmony of united and liberty loving States; and then let Freedom, with her sisters, Education and Religion, cultivate their own pure spirit, strengthen their beneficent laws, and build up, in their mighty realms, the joy and the strength of a truly Republican empire.

If neither of these three things can happen — if neither public opinion, nor a united Northern ballot, nor a peaceful Northern secession can check the aggressions of Slavery, and restore the loss which this Nebraska robbery has wrenched from the hands of Freedom, then. I shall despair of my beloved country; and, taking my children by the hand, providence permitting, I will migrate to the country whence the fathers came out; turning, if possible, the pilgrim tide backwards, to the land whence the Puritans were driven by persecution, but now a land more free than ours.













